United Nations

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

8th

PLENARY MEETING

29 September 1993
at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. JUAN CARLOS WASMOSY, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Paraguay, His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President WASMOSY *(interpretation from Spanish)*: This is the first occasion on which I have had the honour to appear before this lofty international body to speak on behalf of my country, Paraguay. I do so with the profound satisfaction of representing a genuinely democratic Government that has emerged from free elections, and as the first civilian citizen who has held the presidency of the Republic in 39 years.

I wish to congratulate you, President Insanally. Your election, based on your solid professional knowledge and your long political career, is a tribute to you personally and to your country, Guyana, which you so worthily represent. I am pleased to recall in this context that Paraguay, since it entered the United Nations as a founding Member in 1945, has always championed the right to the self-determination of peoples and the independence of political communities which, like Guyana, came to self-government in fulfilment of the obligations imposed by the Charter of the United Nations.

I welcome very warmly the new Members that have just been admitted: the Czech Republic, the Republic of Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, the Principality of Monaco, and Andorra. This welcome is not simply a matter of protocol; it involves the recognition of their respective Governments that I am expressing on behalf of the Paraguayan Government.

A little more than a month ago I inaugurated my Government with the firm resolve to strengthen our foreign relations with all the members of the international community, within the natural limitations set by domestic financial circumstances and contingencies. I would now venture to offer some thoughts for the consideration of the General Assembly.

The new world order broke suddenly upon the world. The bipolar structure of power has now ceased to exist, and the change has taken place peacefully. Paraguay has changed in the same way and with the same rhythm. Today the Paraguayan people is the champion of its own destiny and the will of the people prevails. We live in a condition of respect for human rights, a market economy and State reform. We have successfully and peacefully carried out extraordinary reforms in the political, economic and social fields without external assistance, relying solely on our citizens' faith and aspiration to live in peace, with justice and freedom.

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93-86629 (E)

Distr. GENERAL

A/48/PV.8
11 October 1993

ENGLISH

The Government of Paraguay respects freedom and promotes justice; it is striving to widen the opportunities for human development and well-being.

Economic activity, and in particular the market economy, cannot exist in an institutional vacuum. On the contrary, a security system must be established that ensures the fiscal integrity of all persons, individual initiative and the inviolability of private property, through a stable monetary system and efficient public services.

The priority of the Paraguayan Government is to guarantee this security, this stability and these services, so that those who wish to work and produce can enjoy the fruits of their labour and feel motivated to do their work honestly and efficiently.

The Paraguayan people is now aware that it has triumphed over its many vicissitudes. We have heard many promises about the advent of the new man. We have witnessed many tragedies and dashed hopes.

Today, we believe that the only path towards the great triumphs of collective well-being is that of democracy and freedom. The men and women of Paraguay wish to live in their own way, respecting the law and prospering in harmony and concord.

I would consider my activities of strengthening and consolidating democracy incomplete if in future my compatriots could not continue freely to form political parties and to elect governments without coercion, if they could not live in peace with their families and enjoy the honest fruits of their work, if they could not live fruitful lives and at the end of their days reflect proudly on their successes and achievements.

But as we view the Paraguayan future, we must reflect on a situation fraught with dramatic realities. We have overcome a domestic political situation which for three decades had been met with indifference, marginalization and, ultimately, condemnation by the international community. We endured that situation because of the labour the ingenuity and the great sacrifice of the Paraguayan people. Today we must consolidate our victory and institutionalize democracy as the only possible choice.

We have run into two main obstacles to the attainment of that objective: an increasing rate of population growth and a lack of resources to finance our development with the rapidity required by the rapid increase in our population and the pressing need to raise the standard of living and the well-being of all Paraguayans.

We believe that we must be able to count on the cooperation of the industrialized countries in order to ensure the continued primacy of the values we share with the community of nations.

To accelerate our development we call for an extension of the magnificent collaboration of the United Nations system and its many institutions, such as the United Nations Development Programme, which now has a new, dynamic Administrator and in which the developing countries place great hopes; the effective traditional programme of the United Nations Children's Fund, which champions the rights of children and adolescents; and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, which plays a very important role in regard to the crucial question of population.

We call also on the specialized agencies of the United Nations system - each of which has in its field greatly assisted in our countries' development plans - to redouble their efforts, increase their effectiveness by means of greater creativity, and lower their expenditures by exercising greater control.

This cooperation should go hand in hand with domestic efforts to attract assistance on favourable terms and greater flows of private foreign investment.

The financial institutions, especially the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, should speed up their assistance by reducing their bureaucracies and should provide the fullest possible support to developing countries' projects and programmes. We recognize the great assistance they have provided in the past, and we urge them to exceed even their past achievements in order to ensure a better future for all our countries. If the developing countries do not receive such cooperation, the consequence will be, on the one hand, a prosperous and democratic world with freedom and an abundance of goods for all and, on the other, a world corroded by ignorance, poverty and the enslavement of the poor. It will be difficult for democracy to survive if poverty persists.

Establishing economic progress with equity in Paraguay means strengthening democracy. My greatest desire as Head of State is to establish the democratic system once and for all in my country.

In order to achieve that aim, my Government will act very responsibly, ensuring that its administration does not engage in irregularities, and it will be very strict in enforcing the law. We wish to have the greatest possible transparency in the whole of the governmental process, in both domestic and international affairs.

We believe that the stability of democratic countries lies, among other things, in the integrity of their civil servants, in the independence of the judiciary, in individual and collective security, and in the State's efficiency in promoting development. That is why my Government will pursue and punish anyone who engages in corruption. In that way we intend to eradicate corruption.

We have undertaken to fulfil these purposes in the certainty that the international community will be prepared to support us in so doing.

Nationalistic passions have flared up in many parts of the world, challenging borders and jeopardizing international coexistence. Age-old conflicts still seethe, as can be seen from the terrible bloodshed, and havoc in former Yugoslavia. The United Nations has set up more peace-keeping missions in the last three years than it did in its first 45 years of existence.

At the same time as we are witnessing these events with distress and sorrow, we are rejoicing in the signing of the statement of principles between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. This valuable contribution to world peace is due to the courage and the clear-sightedness of the leaders on both sides, who have been able to overcome the burden of ancestral prejudice to enter into a new harmonious relationship. We also applaud the participation of countries as mediators in these negotiations. They all deserve the world's admiration.

My Government believes that, in compliance with the San Francisco Charter, the Organization will accept as Members all those States that fulfil the requirements set out in the Charter.

We congratulate the United Nations on the tremendous work that is being done in its peace missions. This demonstrates not just that the Organization is alert to the need to find a solution where any event may cause a breach of the peace but also that, in doing so, it tries to realize the hope of peace for suffering peoples, meeting their basic needs and alleviating their difficulties.

The peace to which we aspire cannot come from sterile immobility or from armed respite. It cannot be imposed. It must be dynamic, sincere and generous and must be based on the principles of solidarity between nations.

Let me refer to a contribution from my country, reflected in our universal feeling of friendship. A few years ago, in a small town called Pinasco, a doctor who was a distinguished member of the community proposed that 30 July be designated as a day dedicated to friendship. This idea spread throughout the Latin American continent and to other regions of the world. For this reason I am pleased to suggest that the United Nations adopt that date as the world day of friendship.

Events are giving rise to a higher and higher level of world and regional interdependence. With the Treaty on the Integration of the Common Market in the Southern Cone, known as MERCOSUR, we in the southern cone - Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay - are seeking an improvement in our economies.

The purpose of MERCOSUR is to harmonize economies, to reach better and broader understandings with other economic groups through the provision of mutual facilities. We hope that the negotiations that have begun with the European Economic Community, the future North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Asia-Pacific countries will bear fruit.

Paraguay gives its fullest support to the creation of this Common Market of the South. We hope fervently that there will be frank and full cooperation in all the negotiations between the four countries involved. All our actions should be really consistent with our aims. It is our sincere desire that we may reach an understanding that is just and fair and of benefit to everyone.

While dealing with economic affairs, I should like also to express our desire and hope that full agreement will be reached in the Uruguay Round negotiations. We hope that the markets will open up increasingly. We wish to see trade flowing more freely, without any tariff or other barriers and without subsidies, which undermine the competitiveness of our MERCOSUR products.

We fully support the principle of free trade. One cannot hamper trade by protectionism while professing belief in the principle of free trade.

I have just visited Bolivia, a sister country with which we have signed joint agreements and I made an offer to its Government that Paraguay would serve as a link for its entry into MERCOSUR. I also requested that they themselves, in their turn, shall serve as a link between MERCOSUR and the Andean Pact. Through the system of MERCOSUR and through the Andean Pact, we have established a fresh and, we hope, promising arrangement. Today - 29 September - we commemorate the battle of Boquerón, a symbol of the valour of both peoples which we hope will be a landmark for the future in our search for cooperation, understanding and peace.

This new era represents a challenge in relations between nations. In the process of the globalization of economies, countries must avoid selfishness. They must share their prosperity and technological advances in order to ensure effective progress for all mankind. The European Community, the NAFTA countries and the Asia-Pacific countries should be a dynamic force in economic relations, and should not set new limitations on world trade.

International coexistence requires that we seek to establish mutually supportive understandings and agreements that will strengthen the collective economy and, thus, every country's individual economy.

North America provides a very promising example of this. Mexico, Canada and the United States are proposing a zone of free trade between countries that have different cultures, histories, languages and lifestyles. In spite of these differences they have taken a praiseworthy decision to make their economies complementary.

NAFTA represents an undertaking to ensure shared prosperity through collective arrangements. As we enter a new century, these three countries realize that economic prosperity depends, as never before, on the opening of new markets across the world and increasing the volume of world trade. We hope that when this arrangement is established it will be of great benefit to the whole of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Economic development should not run counter to the preservation and protection of the environment. Both concepts are valid for everyone, irrespective of differences in countries' levels of economic development.

Environmental degradation will continue if we keep on applying such ambiguous criteria as "environmental conditionality". The great meeting on the environment held at Rio in 1992, after very lengthy deliberations, points us in the direction of "sustainable development" - development that can be made compatible with protection of the environment.

We need to fulfil the agreement that was reached at Rio. We must not go back on the commitments undertaken there. Neither should there be double standards - different standards for industrialized and for developing countries. The latter need the cooperation that was promised at that memorable international meeting.

With regard to social problems on a world scale, drug trafficking threatens the economic and political stability of some countries. In this area too the United Nations should take the lead in order to combat the scourge of drugs, with all its disastrous consequences for young people and the money laundering and terrorism that are its ramifications. Paraguay is totally committed to the battle against drug trafficking, the money laundering resulting from it and all the other crimes that are associated with drugs. This struggle requires total international cooperation if drug trafficking is to be eliminated. It has to be recognized that responsibility for this undertaking must be shared by producers, consumers and also intermediaries.

The United Nations is preparing for a conference in 1995, which will be a special landmark in the whole of international coexistence. I refer to the World Summit for Social Development that will be held in Copenhagen. The Government of Paraguay applauds this initiative and offers its fullest cooperation at the preparation stage and in the studies. We are also willing to take an active part in the event itself.

Initiatives of this kind and the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development deserve our fullest support.

Although, as I have said, the issues to which I referred earlier are of great significance to my country, I wish to make the point that the raising of educational standards in my country is my obsession. For this reason, we are trying to improve human resources so that we may make use of the new technology which we sorely lack.

Education is not simply a commitment on the part of the State; it is a challenge shared by all the productive sectors of the country. Technology may provide fresh economic opportunities resulting in new sources of labour.

That is why Paraguay believes that the Bolivar Programme is a good precedent for what can be done between countries determined to face the future by sharing technologies, innovations and industrial competitiveness.

We also hope that the industrialized countries, or those that have achieved a high technological level, will show the necessary will to promote the presence of their companies in our countries, so that their capital and new technology can accelerate progress in our developing countries.

We shall always stress the need for a more balanced treatment of the social and economic issues on the international agenda. Attention must not be given to so-called new global issues at the expense of the problems of development, the struggle against poverty, the defeat of ignorance, and the promotion of international cooperation.

After 48 years, men and institutions are able to concede their mistakes and can strengthen their convictions in order better to achieve their purposes. The United Nations has demonstrated such abilities by renewing and adapting itself to the demands of our changing world. Paraguay is in favour of this and supports the necessary reforms to adapt the Charter to the challenges of a new age. In this way will the United Nations be able to live up to the high ideals and hopes with which it was created.

To that purpose, it is vital that it redistribute functions and responsibilities among its bodies, increase coordination and streamline its processes. The United Nations should be the forum for the genuine expression of the aspirations of all Member States and the primary instrument for genuine and peaceful understanding among all peoples of the world.

We must confront and settle the financial crisis which weighs so heavily on our Organization. It is not logical to assign it tasks without providing adequate means to carry them out. Let us avoid being moved by political motives to transform that inadequacy into administrative negligence and financial paralysis. Let us do the opposite - let our Organization be the great forum of the international scene. Let it be renewed, better, more effective and more equitable.

With timely intervention, the United Nations has brought lengthy conflicts to an end and achieved their settlement. This praiseworthy work must be recognized and if, in some cases, the success has not been great, that has been due to struggles between different power centres. But today we are all equally ready to work to achieve more effective disarmament and to establish new international standards for the use of nuclear energy to benefit mankind and not to destroy it. We have made considerable progress but there remains a long way to go before we have full and complete security in this area. Paraguay will support a disarmament policy as a commitment to the international community.

We continue to believe and have always maintained that the United Nations should assume leadership, with the support of all Member States, in carrying out the necessary changes to establish the rule of peace and the human development to which we all aspire.

My country wishes to underscore the outstanding work of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to express its appreciation for his activities aimed at making the United Nations and its entire system more efficient.

Paraguay has faith in these positive solutions. We pledge to uphold the legal principles of international coexistence and appeal to the loftiest sentiments and the highest sense of responsibility of all leaders of the world. My country believes that this can be achieved and urges that it be made a reality.

No more fratricidal wars. Let us all unite in the war against underdevelopment, against unemployment, and against ignorance, which is the worst of all slaveries.

Reiterating our commitment to full support for the United Nations, we also reaffirm our resolute cooperation with the international community and express our deepest desire for peace, prosperity and development for all the peoples of the world.

I should like to conclude with a message in my native language, Guaraní:

"Ja johayjhú, ñaño pytyvó, icatú haguaicha ñasé ténondé oñondivepá. Aguiyéveté."

This means: "Let us love one another, brothers. Let us help each other to move forward together".

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Paraguay for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. GUNTIS ULMANIS, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Latvia.

Mr. Guntis Ulmanis, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Latvia, His Excellency Mr. Guntis Ulmanis, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President ULMANIS (spoke in Latvian; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, please accept Latvia's congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. The people of Latvia wish you a successful term as leader of this body.

Latvia wishes to pay its respects to those nation States which have recently been admitted to the United Nations and looks forward to cooperation with them.

It has been an eventful year for Latvia. On 18 November 1993, Latvia will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the declaration of independence of Latvia in 1918. Our seventy-fifth year of statehood has been marked by the election and the convening of our Parliament, the Saeima. The convening of the Saeima was an especially solemn occasion in that it meant the full restoration of parliamentary democracy and the Constitution of 1922. Moreover, the convening of the Saeima completed a three-year restoration process that included the re-establishment of our de facto independence in August 1991 and our admission to the United Nations. The re-establishment of Latvia's independence and the restoration of its Constitution, following a half century of suspension, is testimony to the power of democracy, the endurance of the human will and the supremacy of international law.

To understand the processes currently under way in Latvia and in our region, it is helpful to note some aspects of recent history. According to a secret protocol to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, signed by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, Latvia was relegated to the Soviet Union's sphere of influence, an act which cleared the way for the Soviet Union's illegal occupation of Latvia in 1940. Even though the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols were, under international law, void at their signing, Latvia was forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union shortly after the occupation.

Although Latvia lost its sovereignty and independence de facto, its status as a State continued *de jure*. Latvia's *de jure* status continued to be recognized by many States, and this position was echoed in their declarations throughout the fifty-year period of Latvia's occupation. The continuing identity of the State of Latvia was preserved by the application of the principle that illegal acts cannot validly change an existing legal situation - *ex injuria non oritus jus*.

Consequently, when it re-established its independence in 1991 Latvia was quickly able to renew diplomatic relations with those States with which it had had such relations prior to its occupation in 1940. In addition, Latvia continues to adhere to certain bilateral and multilateral agreements to which it became party between 1918 and 1940.

I have stressed the matter of Latvia's continuous identity between 1918 and 1991 in order to emphasize that Latvia is not a newly independent State. This fact is important because the *de jure* continuity of Latvian statehood has legal, political and economic consequences for Latvia, in particular with respect to our relations with the Russian Federation. The key to stable and friendly relations between our two States, in both the political and economic spheres, is recognition by both parties that Latvia was illegally and forcibly occupied and annexed in 1940 by the Soviet Union.

I should like to express Latvia's support for the various efforts by the Secretary-General and the Member States to promote the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular, efforts that were initiated by the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace". Recognizing the pragmatic and forward-looking approach of the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report, preventive diplomacy in particular, we must also consider proposals that will similarly address other responsibilities of the United Nations, including the enhancement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of sustainable development. Latvia's experience with regard

to the utilization of preventive diplomacy may be useful in developing such proposals.

I should like to emphasize that Latvia has utilized preventive diplomacy to the maximum extent possible. Latvia has initiated or welcomed United Nations and regionally sponsored efforts in fact-finding and confidence-building in connection with the issues facing Latvia and our region. Among these efforts is our recent agreement with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to establish a presence in Riga, our capital. These efforts have resulted in an increased understanding of the situation in Latvia, providing the United Nations, Member States and regional organizations with the knowledge and perspective to respond adequately to our problems. The Secretary-General, Member States and regional organizations have been involved, in cooperation with Latvia, in applying these measures to the most important and urgent matter now confronted by Latvia - namely, the continued illegal presence of the military forces of the former Soviet Union on Latvian territory.

For over two years, Latvia has sought the removal of the former Soviet Union's military forces from its territory, through bilateral negotiations with the Russian Federation and with the assistance of the international community. Yet these forces, now under the control of our large neighbour, the Russian Federation, are still stationed on our territory.

Last year the General Assembly addressed this issue under the agenda item entitled "Complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States". In adopting resolution 47/21 by consensus, the General Assembly called upon the Baltic States and the Russian Federation

> "to conclude without delay appropriate agreements, including timetables, for the early, orderly and complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of Estonia and Latvia". *(resolution 47/21, para. 2)*

The Russian Federation, in joining in the consensus for the adoption of resolution 47/21, affirmed its obligation to withdraw its military forces from the Baltic States, which it had earlier assumed as a participating State of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe at the Helsinki meeting in July 1992.

A fact-finding mission headed by Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large of Singapore, recently returned from Latvia and the Baltic States to report to the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 47/21. We thank the Secretary-General for his efforts at ensuring the implementation of this resolution. We also wish to thank Mr. Stoyan Ganev, President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, for accepting our invitation to visit Latvia in July 1993 and witnessing the situation in Latvia at first hand. I hope that, in addition to reviewing the situation regarding foreign military forces, Mr. Ganev gained insight into Latvia's process of renewal.

Before I report to the Assembly on the present situation regarding the issue of the foreign military forces on the territory of Latvia, I should like to express Latvia's support for the ongoing democratic processes in the Russian Federation, at whose head is the lawfully elected President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin. I hope that the political and economic reform process in the Russian Federation will continue and that political forces there will solve their problems using peaceful and democratic means. At critical moments in the past, democratic forces in the Russian Federation have demonstrated their ability to act decisively to keep the Russian Federation on the road to democracy. I am convinced that this will also be the case in these, for Russia, difficult and complicated times.

Since February 1992, State delegations of Latvia and the Russian Federation have held eight sessions of negotiations on the subject of troop withdrawal from Latvia. These negotiations resulted in various agreements, which govern technical matters during withdrawal. Unfortunately, we have failed to secure agreement on the important question of a withdrawal timetable. Latvia has consistently demanded that withdrawal be completed by the end of 1993, two and a half years after Latvia regained its independence. The delegation of the Russian Federation has offered final withdrawal dates ranging from 1994 until 1999, without ever submitting a concrete timetable or systematic plan for withdrawal. The problem of the final withdrawal date is compounded by the demands of the Russian Federation to maintain three bases in Latvia: the radar station in Skrunda, the cosmic intelligence centre in Ventspils and the naval base in Liepaja. We have repeatedly stated, and the international community, including the Russian Federation, has concurred, that withdrawal should be early and complete; furthermore, we cannot permit our soil to be used for purposes that may be directed against third countries.

A second principal issue on which the Russian Federation has held up its withdrawal from Latvia is its

demand for extraordinary social benefits for pensioned officers of the former Soviet Union and the Russian Federation who are residing in Latvia. For years, the officer corps of the occupying army was granted favourable access to apartments, medical care and other social services. Demands for continuation of such privileges are not only unacceptable to Latvia, but unjust to all its residents; we shall not permit these demands to delay the withdrawal process.

At the beginning of the negotiations between our two States, in February 1992, agreement was reached on certain matters. Among these was the requirement that both parties refrain from uncoordinated, unilateral actions during the period of withdrawal. The time since then has been marked by such incidents as the military forces of the Russian Federation conducting unauthorized troop movements on the ground, unauthorized naval movements through Latvia's ports and unauthorized air sorties in Latvian skies. Contrary to agreement, fresh recruits have secretly entered Latvia to replace departing troops.

In the light of the continued presence of these forces, foreign investment in Latvia, which is necessary for the development of our small country, has been discouraged. In addition, the military forces of the Russian Federation have done substantial damage to Latvia's environment.

Latvia seeks an assurance that its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity will be respected and that a threat to international peace and security will not arise from its territory. I hope that the negotiations with the Russian Federation, which began yesterday, on 28 September 1993, will be pragmatic in nature and will soon lead to an agreement providing for the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territory of Latvia. Such an agreement would have the potential to open a new chapter in the relationship between our two States, a chapter containing neither suspicion nor animosity. We could then even foresee a time when our societies and children would be free of the prejudices of the past.

Latvia welcomes the complete withdrawal of the military forces of the Russian Federation from Lithuania, which is a step toward improving the security of the Baltic region.

As I have stated, it is important to recognize that Latvia was illegally occupied and annexed, and that a principal consequence of these events is the significantly altered demographic situation there. This situation must be taken into account if one is to understand the internal situation in Latvia. In 1940, 75 per cent of Latvia's inhabitants were ethnic Latvians but today they constitute only 52 per cent of Latvia's population. During the Soviet occupation, hundreds of thousands of persons were deported to Siberia, and many thousands were arrested and executed. During the Second World War tens of thousands died, were sent to Nazi Germany for forced labour, or were forced to emigrate to the West in order to escape the Red Terror. In sum, during the occupation, the pre-war population of Latvia was reduced by one third. Among the victims who suffered this fate were the Livs, one of the indigenous peoples of Latvia, who at present number only a few dozen.

During the post-war years, the deportation and massive involuntary emigration of Latvians from their native land was paralleled by a heavy influx of residents of the Soviet Union. In 1945, newly arrived Soviet military personnel were immediately allocated approximately 25 per cent of all the apartments in Riga, the capital of Latvia. Many of these apartments had earlier been vacated by Latvian families which had been deported to Siberia or which had been forced to flee to the West. In addition to the introduction into Latvia of active and retired military personnel, the Soviet regime, using offers of various privileges, enticed civilian labourers and managers from the Soviet Union to migrate to Latvia.

The pace of population transfer increased dramatically after 1959, when Soviet leaders initiated a policy of colonization for Latvia by undertaking a heavy industrialization drive there. During the next 30 years the total population of Latvia increased by 27 per cent. While the indigenous population grew at a rate of 7.6 per cent, population growth in the migrant community was 58.5 per cent, with the result that mechanical growth exceeded natural growth by close to a factor of eight. I should like to stress that no other country has lost, as a result of occupation and colonialism, such a large part of its indigenous population during modern times. In no other modern-day country has the indigenous population nearly become a minority in its own country, as has happened in Latvia.

We believe that the restoration of our independence has given us the opportunity to improve our demographic situation. If we can reach a point where Latvians feel secure about their future, we will then have the freedom to invest more of our resources in finding solutions to global problems.

The change in the demographic situation of Latvia during the Soviet occupation cannot be conveyed by numbers alone. Latvians were subjected to discrimination, in particular with respect to the use of the Latvian language and professional development. Command of the Russian language became necessary in both the educational system and many workplaces, while use of the Latvian language was eliminated in many spheres. Further, the policy of the Soviet authorities was to prevent access by Latvians to professions in various governmental and strategic fields.

With a view to ensuring the survival of the Latvian people, it has become necessary for Latvia to develop a law on citizenship which will safeguard the national identity of its indigenous population. Concurrently, Latvia will uphold its obligations under international human rights law.

Latvia has already determined its present body of citizens through a process of resident registration. In 1991, along with the restoration of its sovereignty and independence, Latvia restored citizenship to those persons from whom it had been taken in 1940; this was done regardless of their national, religious or ethnic backgrounds, and citizenship was granted to their descendants as well. Pursuant to Latvia's Constitution, it is this body of persons which participated in the June 1993 parliamentary elections. Latvia's present body of citizens includes approximately 400,000 non-ethnic Latvians, or approximately 25 per cent of the electorate - a figure that reflects the non-ethnic Latvian composition of the electorate prior to the occupation in 1940.

Latvia's democratically elected Parliament, the Saeima, will in the near future adopt a citizenship law which will set the requirements, in accordance with international law, for obtaining Latvian citizenship for residents of Latvia who arrived after 1940. Persons transferred into Latvia during the Soviet occupation exercise freely all rights granted by international human rights instruments. According to experts of the Council of Europe, the protection afforded by Latvia's legislation is comparable to that provided by the constitutional instruments of most States members of the Council of Europe and guaranteed collectively by the Council of Europe, in particular through the European Convention on Human Rights.

Historical minorities of Latvia such as Russians, Belarussians, Poles, Jews and others have their own schools and active national cultural societies, which help to maintain each group's national identity.

A peaceful, legal and pragmatic restoration process has begun in Latvia. Numerous appraisals by the international community have affirmed that this process is in fact peaceful and is being conducted within the confines of international law.

Latvia has no reason to hide its internal situation and has thus welcomed numerous examinations of its human rights record. On behalf of Latvia, I should like to thank the Secretary-General and the States Members of the United Nations for the fact-finding mission, headed by the present Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, which visited Latvia in October 1992. I should like to quote from the Mission's conclusions:

> "Latvia is going through a transitional period following the reestablishment of independence. During this period the Latvian Government is endeavouring to redress certain historical inequities and injustices perpetrated during Soviet rule from 1940 to 1991.
>
> "This has given rise to anxiety among the non-ethnic Latvians about their future status and role in the country. It is this sense of insecurity rather than any gross violation of human rights that is most characteristic of the situation prevailing in Latvia today.
>
> "The information received and examined by the Mission does not reveal gross and systematic violations of human rights in Latvia. Individual violations which have been reported are limited and not related to discriminatory policy as such and they should and can be remedied at the appropriate level. On the positive side, it should be emphasized that no instances of violence, no mass dismissals from employment, exclusion from educational establishments, evictions from apartments, or expulsions were reported." *(A/47/748, paras. 21-23)*

The report of the United Nations human rights fact-finding mission to Latvia is similar to reports submitted by the Council of Europe, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the European Court of Human Rights. Despite these numerous affirmations that human rights are not being violated in Latvia, it has become the object of political attacks - the Russian Federation constantly accuses Latvia of human

addition, resources of international organizations, including the United Nations, have been expended.

I shall now address the grave financial crisis that faces the United Nations and has forced the Secretary-General to take drastic measures to economize. Latvia believes that a solution to the crisis that is acceptable to all Member States and based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations must be found.

Latvia wishes to bring to the attention of the General Assembly an *ad hoc* decision which was made for reasons of financial and political expediency, but which will in fact contribute to the financial crisis. I am referring to the decision taken by the General Assembly in December 1992 to determine, *inter alia*, the assessment rates of 15 Member States, including Latvia, according to an *ad hoc* method rather than the standard method for determining capacity to pay.

The December 1992 decision is not in accordance with the Charter principle of sovereign equality because the two different methods for determining assessments result in unequal financial obligations for different Member States. Notwithstanding the fact that Latvia and the other two Baltic States are not successors to the former Soviet Union, they have been made to assume excessive financial obligations of the former Soviet Union and even to accept a portion of its contribution to the Working Capital Fund.

Latvia is now entering its third year as a State Member of the United Nations. We expect to increase our involvement in the work of the United Nations and other international organizations, participating in the search for solutions to global problems. At the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, we addressed two problem areas where we should be able to make contributions: the rights of minorities and the rights of foreigners.

Latvia reiterates the offer it made at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to host an international conference in its resort city of Jurmala to examine possibilities for redirecting resources from armaments towards rehabilitating the environment.

Latvia supports the establishment of the post of United Nations high commissioner for human rights. We also urge an increase in the percentage of the regular budget allocated to the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

The position of Latvia regarding non-governmental organizations is that they play a valuable role on the international stage, especially in the area of human rights. Their access to the United Nations human-rights system should be increased.

With respect to the debate on restructuring the Security Council, Latvia supports increasing the number of members of the Security Council. Such reform must ensure that the Council is adequately balanced between large and small States.

Latvia supports the efforts aimed at rationalizing the structure and the agenda of the General Assembly.

Latvia welcomes the positive processes under way in the Middle East, South Africa, Cambodia and Haiti. We hope that, with the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations, peace will prevail in the former Yugoslavia, Georgia, Somalia and elsewhere where blood is still being spilt.

Latvia has a history of participation in international affairs, including its term as Presiding Member of the Council of the League of Nations. In order to mark our historic contribution to international relations, and to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the signing of our declaration of independence, Latvia has undertaken the task of restoring a hall at the United Nations Office in Geneva. This hall, located in the Palais des Nations, and adorned with amber collected from the shores of the Baltic Sea, was decorated and endowed by the Government and the people of Latvia in 1938 as a donation to the League of Nations. May the return of that hall at the Palais des Nations to its original splendour symbolize the victory of justice constituted by the return of Latvia to full membership in the international community.

It is my belief that the restoration of our independence will enable Latvia, a small State, to play a greater role in securing peace and democracy in the world. I am convinced that together we can leave our children a better world with more security, more faith and more freedom.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Latvia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Guntis Ulmanis, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MRS. VIOLETA BARRIOS DE CHAMORRO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Nicaragua.

Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, President of the Republic of Nicaragua, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Nicaragua, Her Excellency Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President BARRIOS de CHAMORRO (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you sincerely, Sir, on behalf of our Latin American and Caribbean region, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

Some nations, like Nicaragua, are in transition from war to peace. We are in the process of shaking off an inheritance of 50 years of right-wing dictatorship and 10 years of left-wing dictatorship. At the same time, we are moving from a centralized economy to a social market economy. Each one of these three transitions is an enormous challenge requiring fluid and timely international political and economic cooperation.

Nicaragua is a special case. My country has had to endure this triple transition. We are overcoming a post-war era, building democracy and restoring our economy's strength and dynamism, all in the midst of a polarized society. I sincerely believe that few societies in contemporary history have had to confront so many challenges at the same time and in such difficult circumstances.

The Governments and organizations that have been following closely the critical situation in which I found my country when I took office - with a gross national product similar to that of an economy of the 1940s and an unprecedented rate of hyperinflation - can easily understand the magnitude of our efforts.

We need to build a democracy, reconstruct a wounded society and compete economically with the world, all while following an economic adjustment plan that leaves us no resources for social investment. There is hunger in my country. There is hatred. There are many weapons. But there is also an absolute desire to build a society at peace.

Nicaragua has been a symbol of war and of hope in this decade. Nicaragua should continue to be a symbol of hope. We will achieve this only with international assistance.

With great effort, we have limited inflation to 3.5 per cent annually, but with such difficulty that we were able to achieve economic growth of only 0.2 per cent in 1992, after eight years of a falling gross national product.

I recognize that the international community has tried to understand the immense complexity of our process. In 1990, the General Assembly granted Nicaragua special treatment, and called upon the international community to provide us with effective and timely support. Since then, my country has fulfilled all agreements and commitments undertaken with multilateral institutions and the international community. We are engaged in creating the necessary conditions so that private, national and international investment can contribute to the economic growth of the country and hence initiate the reconstruction process and the sustained development needed by Nicaragua.

After paying for oil imports and external debt, my Government has received international assistance amounting to an average of less than $12 million a year, which does not cover the costs of such a difficult and complex transition. Our economy has stabilized; however, this has been a slow process and it does not satisfy the aspirations of an impoverished people demanding the attainment, in a short period of time, of levels of well-being that they deserve.

The economic problem is our greatest source of instability, because it creates tensions in the political and social environment, jeopardizing national and regional stability. If foreign aid arrives late, if strong conditions are placed on it or it becomes a political tool, as happened in 1992 and is happening now, democracy in Nicaragua could collapse.

My country depends on the financial support of the international community. Our exports are equivalent to

only $250 million a year, and we need $850 million to finance our imports and service our inherited external debt.

I have come to the General Assembly, to this forum of fraternal nations, to ask the international community to continue helping Nicaragua. We need the United Nations to help us to maintain and to guarantee economic bilateral cooperation at current levels for my country. We need additional resources to reactivate economic production and growth, to strengthen the creation of social networks and to renew the process of conciliation.

We must not forget that on 25 February 1990, to the surprise of the entire international community, we held the first free and participatory elections in all the history of my country. On that day, Nicaraguans laid down their weapons and we all celebrated the triumph of peace, aware that we were choosing the path of democracy, freedom, peace and respect for human rights.

When the time came to vote, every citizen voted against decades of violence and bloodshed, and as we voted, we thought about erasing from our minds the sad images of 10 years of war, the orphans, the widows and the maimed. We voted in the determination to put an end to the tragic parade of soldiers, many of them children, combatants in a war between brothers.

This was my first mandate: to generate a policy of national reconciliation; not an easy task in a society accustomed to political polarization and to confrontation. Today, three years later, I continue to be committed to pursuing national dialogue as the only viable way to solve our problems. The call to achieve this national understanding has been met with solidarity and support from countries and international organizations.

In the national dialogue, we rely on the presence, which greatly enhances the validity of the process, of representatives of the Presidents of Central America, a region that can envision its future only in the larger prospect of integration and unity with Nicaragua.

The sincere gratitude of my people and Government goes to my Central American colleagues, to the representatives of the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, to the Catholic Church and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who have contributed so much to peace and reconciliation in Nicaragua.

I especially wish to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his support in the formation of an active group of donor countries, friends of Nicaragua, which, within the context of the United Nations, will help us identify our requirements for external cooperation and the means for channelling this necessary assistance.

I believe that countries in transition from war to peace, which have signed international agreements to attain total pacification, democracy and reconstruction, should have access to a special fund to enable them to stand again on their own feet and go forward.

Nicaragua and other countries in Latin America, such as Haiti and El Salvador, need exceptional treatment because we cannot compete with nations that have not suffered the pain of the political, economic and social destruction caused by war.

When we appeal to the international community, we do so in the conviction that the principal efforts for the reconstruction of our country are our own responsibility as Nicaraguans, as the actors in our own development. The Government of which I am President assumes this level of responsibility in order to prevent our democracy from regressing. I reaffirm once more before the Assembly the commitment I made to the Nicaraguan nation not to rest until democracy has been consolidated.

I shall continue to work to ensure that freedom of expression, assembly and association are never again restricted. My commitment to human rights is firm and unalterable.

My decision to achieve the institutionalization of the armed forces in Nicaragua is irreversible. For that reason, in addition to drastically reducing my country's army, I am introducing reforms and laws that will guarantee the total subordination of the military to civilian authority and clearly establish fixed terms of office in the upper echelons.

We are in the process of building a democratic institutional structure, including a small, professional, non-partisan army at the service of the nation as a whole. Similarly, we are making great efforts to disarm civilian groups and to prevent the thousands of weapons already confiscated from being used once again to undermine Nicaragua's democratic achievements and so undermine the regional stability of Central America. Weapons confiscated by our authorities are burned in public for all to see.

In consultation with other countries of the international community, my Government has decided to host in our capital city of Managua, in May 1994, the second international conference on new and restored democracies. We want to share experiences, closely examine the structures of the new democracies and adopt proposals that will contribute to their self-betterment.

The United Nations must respond positively to the changes in the world today. Nicaragua supports recognition by the United Nations of the rights of the Republic of China - Taiwan. We believe it is only right to recognize the fundamental rights of the 21 million people who live on that territory. Nicaragua firmly supports this noble initiative.

Finally, I share the joy of all our countries at the historic signing of the declaration of principles between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. This agreement clearly demonstrates that peace is possible when the will for dialogue and negotiation exists. It should serve as one of the great lessons of our times and a source of new hope for global peace.

We Nicaraguans trust in God, in the solidarity of friendly nations and in cooperation by international organizations; the generous, fraternal, sincere hand they stretch out to us will enable the Nicaraguan people to achieve the new society of which it dreamt when it voted in our general elections on 25 February 1990.

We in Nicaragua know that the century that is coming to an end leaves us some hard lessons. Yet it allows us to face with courage the great challenges that will enable us to consolidate a world society inspired by peace, freedom and progress. For that reason, on the threshold of the new century, I would like to reaffirm, in the name of the Nicaraguan people, our deep commitment to contribute to the development of a more prosperous and more just world order. That is the commitment I make to democracy and to all the peoples of the world.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Nicaragua for the statement she has just made.

Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, President of the Republic of Nicaragua, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. KINKEL (Germany) *(spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation)*: Please accept my warm congratulations, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I wish you luck and success in your high office. At the same time, I extend a cordial welcome to the new Members of our Organization.

Addressing the Assembly 20 years ago, Willy Brandt said that the Federal Republic of Germany's purpose in joining the United Nations was to help serve the cause of world peace. That has always been, and will remain, the fundamental aim of German foreign policy. At that time, in a bipolar world, Germany was divided. In that year, 1973, the October war broke out in the Middle East. In South Africa the inhuman apartheid regime was dominant. Today my country is united in peace and harmony with our neighbours. Today we can congratulate Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and neighbouring Arab countries on a historic breakthrough. Today the policy of apartheid has been overcome. Without the resolve to seek peace, these developments would not have been possible.

World peace, which appears to have come closer as bipolarity has receded, must not remain an unfulfilled vision. The international community's desire for peace led to the founding of the United Nations after the Second World War. It remains our moral and political obligation to fulfil that legacy. There can be no more important task. In the quest for peace we are faced with a new challenge and a new danger, but we also have a historic opportunity.

We are faced with the great challenge of overcoming hunger and poverty around the world, of preserving the natural sources of life, and of creating the foundations for a long-term global population policy. When people have to leave their native lands, when human rights are violated, there can be no peace. Peace is not merely the silence of guns. Hence, economic and social challenges must be very high on the global agenda. The world is deeply unjust. The distribution of mankind's opportunities is woefully unequal. This we should not tolerate.

The danger confronting us is that peace in many parts of the world is threatened by new conflicts, especially those of an ethnic nature. The continuing proliferation of

modern weapons and weapon technology increases the destructive potential of these conflicts.

Our opportunity, after the end of the East-West confrontation, is to develop the United Nations into what its founding fathers intended it to be: the principal guardian of peace. In performing that role the United Nations must have the support of the numerous other international organizations that are functioning successfully today.

I truly believe that we can master the economic, ecological and social challenges and overcome the danger of a relapse into a confrontation of States, peoples, cultures and religions only if we resolutely seize the historic opportunity to strengthen the global multilateral system and the United Nations.

Today no country alone can cope with global challenges. Hence we must counteract nationalism with multilateralism. German foreign policy is aimed at strengthening the multilateral world order. It is committed to the goal of European integration. Its purpose is to harmonize and create a fair balance of interests. German foreign policy is therefore a policy within, in support of, and together with the United Nations.

I agree with the Secretary-General: Peace can only be preserved if we strike at the roots of conflict. His proposed agenda for development must go hand-in-hand with "An Agenda for Peace". Misery, starvation and poverty are still the overriding problem in many countries.

At the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and at the Rio Conference, the developing and industrial countries agreed on a comprehensive partnership for promoting development and protecting the environment. For that partnership to be successful both sides, North and South, must contribute their share. By carrying out economic and political reforms, making more efficient use of their funds and cutting military expenditure, and ensuring greater democratic control and respect for the rule of law, many developing countries have embarked on the right course. The World Summit for Social Development, scheduled to take place in Copenhagen in 1995, must be a forum for dialogue on the social issues re-emerging all over the world.

The industrial countries have undertaken to support the efforts of the developing countries by improving the general conditions for world trade in a spirit of solidarity. Such assistance can never be more than help towards self-help. What is required is more entrepreneurial cooperation with developing countries, more direct investment, improved cooperation in the field of technology, the opening of markets and the elimination of trade barriers. The Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) must at long last establish reliable rules for free trade and be brought to a conclusion by December 15. Germany, one of the leading trading nations, is committed to these goals. If new trading blocs were to form, with the attendant conflicting interests, new political confrontations would soon follow. Protectionism would be the worst outcome.

The global economy is in the throes of a fundamental structural change. International competition is becoming more intense. Many highly industrialized societies are confronted with fresh challenges. Unemployment and sluggish growth are unexpectedly severe burdens on their productive capacity, both domestically and externally. On the other hand, the trend towards a single world economy opens up the first opportunity for billions of people to offer their products in all markets.

All of us, industrial and developing countries alike, must make peace with nature. The United Nations is called upon to protect the natural foundations of life. I propose that the United Nations develop an early-warning system for environmental disasters. The momentum of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must be maintained. My country is ready for comprehensive cooperation. Germany can make a special contribution, particularly as regards the transfer of environment-friendly technologies.

The population explosion is a threat to the planet's equilibrium. Whereas in the eighteenth century the world population increased by a quarter of a billion in 75 years, it is now increasing by this number every three years. Most of this increase is taking place in countries whose economic and ecological resources are already strained to the limit. Family planning must be enhanced, the poverty gap reduced, and education and knowledge disseminated among women and men alike. A successful International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo next year, is therefore mandatory.

Respect for human rights is a universal obligation. It is a focal point of German foreign policy. Human rights and the protection of minorities belong together. Racism, cultural arrogance and the delusion of wanting to create "ethnically clean" areas constitute a threat to peace. Yugoslavia is a terrible example of this. Where civic,

economic, cultural and religious rights of minorities are concerned, the majority may not rule by fiat.

The Declaration and Programme of Action of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights represent the consensus opinion of the community of nations. They reaffirm the universal validity of the human rights. Now it is important to seek rapid implementation. I wish to mention five specific points:

Firstly, my country has long advocated the appointment of a high commissioner for human rights. He should be authorized to take steps on his own initiative to protect human rights and to give active support to those countries seeking to improve the human rights situation.

Secondly, we need an international criminal court. The International Law Commission has submitted a full draft statute for such a court. The pressure on those who trample human rights under foot must be increased now. Those who torture on this Earth must live in fear of punishment.

Thirdly, in order to prosecute speedily those who are responsible for the ghastly violations of human rights in the former Yugoslavia, the Security Council has set up an ad hoc Tribunal. The elected judges must now begin their work right away. A chief prosecutor should be appointed without delay.

Fourthly, the non-governmental organizations have become part of the world's conscience and therefore have an increasingly important role to play in the defence of human rights.

Finally, the instruments for ensuring respect for human rights must be given a higher priority in the United Nations budget.

The crisis in the former Yugoslavia, and especially the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is one of the most depressing episodes of our time. A Member of the United Nations has fallen victim to a war of conquest accompanied by genocide and mass expulsions. For the first time since the Second World War, frontiers in Europe are being redrawn by force of arms. The principles of the United Nations have been treated with contempt. The credibility of our institutions - indeed the credibility of the United Nations itself - is being put to the test.

If the fighting continues, the winter will prove to be an awful disaster for the suffering people. It must therefore be stopped as quickly as possible and steps taken to ensure that humanitarian aid is provided. We therefore support the Geneva efforts to settle the conflict, in spite of doubts about the current plan, and we express special thanks to the Co-Chairmen, Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, for the difficult job they are doing.

A settlement now seems within reach, but it must be accepted by all parties to the conflict. No party must impose its will on another. The Bosnian Muslims must be given viable territory. We need an assurance that the community of nations will be resolutely and actively involved in the implementation of a settlement.

We cannot tolerate a situation in which the Muslims, who have lived in Europe for centuries, would have fewer rights than their Christian neighbours. Through preventive measures we must ensure that the tragedy of this war does not spill over into neighbouring regions. What is now required is proposals for controlled disarmament in the region. This is a task for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

After decades of war and bitter antagonism, the Middle East is experiencing a historic breakthrough towards peace. We all want the peace process to become irreversible. Germany and its partners in the European Community have undertaken to provide political, economic and particularly financial support. They have earmarked about a billion deutschemarks for this purpose.

I should like to express my respect for both sides for their political courage and their will for peace. I call upon those who still hesitate to help sustain the peace process. I appeal to all to renounce the use of force.

The continuing proliferation of arms in many parts of the world is still highly disturbing. President Clinton's proposals have our support. Encouraging progress has been achieved in the form of the Convention placing a global ban on chemical weapons and of the agreement reached on a mandate for negotiations in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament with a view to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The test moratorium must be extended. There must be no further testing.

The nuclear and non-nuclear Powers alike are urged to consolidate the non-proliferation regime. When the matter comes up for decision in 1995, the Non-Proliferation Treaty must be extended indefinitely. As

the representative of a country which many years ago unilaterally and bindingly renounced the possession of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction, I appeal to all Members: accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The laying of mines in large regions in many countries has become a scourge for the population. It prevents the return of refugees and the resumption of farming. Thousands have been killed or horribly mutilated. It must be stopped. The European Community has, with our support, seized the initiative. We need a fund to finance mine detection and disposal operations.

My country's European anchorage is indispensable on both political and economic grounds. My Belgian colleague, Willy Claes, has already explained the position of the 12 members of the European Community.

Stability in Europe cannot remain a privilege of the Western nations. The peoples of the reformist countries fought for their freedom and we encouraged them to do so. We shall not abandon them now. We must gradually open the road to the Euro-Atlantic institutions for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Those institutions include the European Community and the Council of Europe as well as the Western European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). I am expecting a clear message from the NATO summit - which is to take place at the beginning of 1994 - like the one that came from the European Community summit meeting in Copenhagen. In this process, no new ruptures must emerge. A lasting peaceful order in Europe is not feasible without including Russia.

Over the last four years Germany has made a greater financial effort than any other nation to help the reformist countries on their road to democracy, the rule of law and a free market economy. This assistance, too, is a major contribution to conflict-prevention and the safeguarding of peace. In the present critical phase, Russia's friends and partners - who include the Germans in particular - must continue to provide political and economic support for President Yeltsin's reforms.

I am concerned about developments in Georgia. We must achieve a cease-fire and work out a viable political solution. This is a task for the United Nations in particular.

The desire for peace makes it imperative for all countries to seek closer regional cooperation. We support intra-Africa efforts to resolve conflicts and welcome the stronger commitment on the part of the Organization of African Unity.

We are gratified by the democratic changes to be observed in Latin America in recent years. Nearly everywhere democracy and free-market principles have asserted themselves and sources of conflict have, thank God, been eliminated.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations has become an important instrument for cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. European-Asian cooperation must be intensified.

"An Agenda for Peace" has become the lodestone for the world Organization's further development. I wish to take this opportunity, Mr. Secretary-General, to express my thanks for your commitment. The Security Council and the General Assembly have constructively taken up the Agenda's proposals. However, conflict prevention must begin at an early stage. Preventing fires is better than having to put them out. We must focus our energy on the possibilities of preventive diplomacy, confidence-building measures, fact-finding and the early detection of conflicts.

The CSCE must back the United Nations within its sphere of jurisdiction. The relations between the two organizations have been intensified. The CSCE should be given wider scope for conflict prevention and crisis management.

In wars and crises, the Blue Helmets have helped to protect the civilian population, to prevent the spread of warfare and to initiate the transition to democracy. Some 80,000 troops from more than 70 countries are engaged in 17 peace-keeping missions around the world. They and the United Nations Secretariat's Department of Peace-keeping Operations deserve our thanks.

One of the most successful operations was the one in Namibia. In Cambodia the United Nations has sponsored free elections and restored hopes of lasting peace after decades of terror and oppression. Of course - and it is important to stress this - not all the hopes placed in the United Nations can be fulfilled, and it would be wrong to deny that difficulties have been encountered. But what would happen without the United Nations and the Blue Helmets? To the critics I therefore say that we need not less but more commitment to the United Nations.

In Somalia starvation has been overcome. The reconciliation process has been overshadowed by incidents in which troops and civilians have been killed. These are tragedies, but without the United Nations Operation in Somalia, hundreds of thousands would have had to die. Germany has been providing humanitarian aid within the scope of this major peace-keeping operation, our largest commitment of personnel so far within the framework of the United Nations.

Our involvement in such operations has the backing of the German people. There is a consensus in our country in favour of widening our scope for contributing to peace. We are engaged in a passionate debate over proposed constitutional amendments which would enable Germany to participate in all United Nations operations without restriction.

A policy for peace also means strengthening the rule of law as opposed to the rule of the strong. If the United Nations is prevented from carrying out its mandate, it will have to be in a position to authorize the Security Council to resort to force, as provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter.

However, the use of military means should be considered only if we have a clear political blueprint for resolving the conflict. Force must always be the last resort. Consequently, our contribution to the United Nations will continue to be of a mainly political and economic nature. Greater emphasis will have to be placed on United Nations peace-keeping measures in view of the growing responsibilities and demands.

First, the United Nations Secretariat's Department of Peace-keeping Operations must be improved logistically and organizationally and in terms of staff. The German Government is willing to make further experts available to the Secretariat.

Secondly, effective crisis management presupposes the ability to react swiftly. The Secretary-General's initiative for the establishment of stand-by forces has my support. Stand-by forces should not be confined to military units but should include civilian personnel and experts ranging from police to election observers. But participation must always be voluntary and be subject to the fulfilment of national conditions.

Thirdly, enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations presupposes a link-up of military forces. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has declared its willingness to make its capacities available. The same holds true for the Western European Union (WEU).

Fourthly, in many countries military training is geared solely to the traditional duties of the army. The specific tasks of peace-keeping require a completely different kind of training. The national preparation of "Blue-Helmet" forces needs to be coordinated to a greater degree by the United Nations. For this, common training guidelines are needed. The United Nations should also create its own training capacity; that is my view. Common training and exercises are, at the same time, important steps in confidence-building.

Fifthly, peace-keeping operations require sound financing. The responsibility for peace also includes the prompt and complete payment of contributions by all Members.

Humanitarian concerns have been of pivotal importance for Germany's involvement in United Nations activities from the very start. In the Middle East, in Africa, in South-East Asia, in the Gulf region, in Somalia and in former Yugoslavia we are providing humanitarian assistance. We have assumed responsibility for transport, medical care, the monitoring of disarmament measures and the repatriation of refugees. Together with our partners in the European Community we have called for the creation of a post of coordinator for humanitarian assistance.

Part of our humanitarian commitment is the readiness to assist refugees from the civil war, whose situation is very distressing. We have admitted more than 350,000 refugees from former Yugoslavia. I urge the General Assembly to use every opportunity to strengthen the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Mrs. Ogata deserves high praise for the job she is doing. More international solidarity and burden-sharing is called for. We must not abandon those countries which, as neighbouring or target countries for the refugees, are particularly affected. The aim must be to offer shelter to refugees from civil wars or other disasters near their home countries in order to facilitate their early return to those countries. For this we need binding rules. I therefore propose the drafting of an international convention to regulate large-scale refugee movements.

Another focal point of our involvement in United Nations activities has been what the Secretary-General refers to in his "Agenda for Peace" as post-conflict peace-building. Lasting peace depends on the establishment of democratic and market-economy structures

based on the rule of law. Investment in the democratization process is an investment in peace. My country, Germany, sees this as a priority of its commitment to development. That is why Germany participates in missions to observe elections, provides economic experts, and assists in the creation of democratic administrative, judicial and police institutions.

I should like to stress that a culture of peace is another prerequisite for lasting peace. Not only governments but also individual citizens must develop the will for peace if we want to overcome racial hatred and religious conflict. A culture of peace encompasses a dialogue between ethnic groups as well as between religions and cultures. The Europeans live next door to and in close contact with Islam. We need bridges of mutual understanding, not new enemy images. We need to promote education for peace. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with its mandate to foster relations between nations, therefore deserves comprehensive support.

Germany advocates the strengthening of all United Nations bodies. We do not want a never-ending discussion on reform, but greater efficiency. We welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to reorganize the Secretariat. The efforts to revitalize the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council also meet with our full support. We would be happy if the United Nations were better represented in Germany and have therefore made an offer for the relocation of institutions of technical cooperation to Bonn.

The most important decisions on security and peace are today made in the Security Council. This is what the Charter envisaged right from the start. Anyone who wants peace must strengthen the Security Council.

In its response to the Secretary-General's request, the Federal Government has stated that efficiency and credibility are of equal importance for the future composition of the Security Council.

Germany is prepared to assume responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council also. I stated this at the last session of the General Assembly. However, we will be able to maintain and strengthen the credibility of the Council only if, in deliberating on reforming it, we also take into consideration the growing importance of the third world.

Finally, let me state that Germany wants to be and will be a driving force in efforts to strengthen the United Nations. We need to achieve a basic consensus for the important tasks ahead of us. In my view this consensus lies in the rule of law. The law protects the weak and legitimizes force where it is unavoidable. The law is an expression of partnership and is opposed to tyranny and hegemony. It is the acceptance of law that creates justice. Only where justice reigns can peace flourish.

Mr. QIAN Qichen (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: At the outset I should like warmly to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the current session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that given your proven talent and extensive experience, and with the cooperation of all delegations, you will steer our session to full success. I also wish to express my sincere thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his remarkable accomplishments during the last session. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome and congratulations to the new Members which have been admitted to the United Nations this year.

The world has moved into a transitional period towards multipolarity since the disintegration of the bipolar structure. It had been hoped that the end of the cold war would bring peace and prosperity to the world. Indeed, the prospects of avoiding another world war and ensuring a lasting peace have improved. However, contradictions that had lain dormant during the cold war have begun to emerge, and manifestations of hegemonism and power politics in international relations are on the rise. Peace and development, so ardently aspired to by mankind, still face grave challenges.

The relative stability Europe once enjoyed has been upset. Many countries are plagued by severe economic slumps or by political upheaval. Some regions are torn by ethnic or religious feuds exacerbated by territorial disputes, leading to intermittent conflicts and armed clashes. A regional war is raging at the southern end of the Eurasian land mass. All this can only have a negative impact on Europe and on the world at large.

In the meantime, a number of developed countries have developed a "post-cold-war syndrome". Some have sunk into the longest recession since the Second World War. In the new setting, internal contradictions have sharpened, political scandals are rife, racism has reared its ugly head, trade protectionism is on the rise, and xenophobic violence is spreading. Public disaffection has been manifest, and the entrenched political establishment

has been shaken. This trend has adversely affected the stability of the countries concerned and complicated international relations.

The new international environment has led to an even more dire plight for many developing countries. Increasing foreign intervention has heightened various internal factors of instability, thus compounding their difficulties. Their rights to independence, subsistence and development have been neither duly respected nor safeguarded. Therefore, interference from the outside should cease, and the international community should give top priority to helping those countries achieve political stability and overcome economic difficulties. Lasting world peace and stability will remain elusive if the developing countries are still beset by persistent political unrest and if the North-South gap continues to widen.

There is no denying the fact that peace and development remain the overriding issues of our time. To preserve peace and accelerate development has become the pressing demand of the people of all countries, but especially of those in the developing countries.

The world we live in is as diversified as ever. There are now more than 180 independent sovereign States, which differ not only in social systems but also in stages of development. Moreover, they have widely diverse ideologies, cultural traditions, ethnic identities and religious faiths. We should recognize and respect those differences and diversities, and treat each other as equal members of the international community. We should promote interchanges in the spirit of seeking common ground while setting aside differences. We should oppose any attempt to impose a particular model on large numbers of countries, as diverse as they are.

We believe that there can be genuine peace, international harmony and common development among States only when international relations strictly conform to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and are based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and other accepted norms of international conduct. Increased economic and cultural interchanges between States have deepened their interdependence. It is absolutely necessary that States open up to each other; enhance exchanges, mutual understanding and cooperation; and share the benefit of complementarity. But all this will be possible only on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.

In order to attain the overall objective of peace and development, the Chinese Government has on many occasions called for the establishment of a new international political and economic order of peace, stability, justice and rationality based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and on the recognition of the diversity of the world and of the differences among States. Under the new order, mutual respect and cooperation between States on an equal footing will replace hegemonism and power politics; peace talks, dialogue and consultations will replace the use or threat of force; and equality, mutual benefit and accommodation of each other's needs will replace trade protectionism and unequal exchanges. The Chinese Government is ready to cooperate extensively with all other countries and will continue to make unremitting efforts for the establishment of such a new order, and for peace and development of the world.

The report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) submitted by the Secretary-General contains many important, thought-provoking recommendations and ideas that deserve careful consideration. We commend the Secretary-General for his efforts therein. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China has always supported the positive endeavours of the United Nations in preserving world peace and stability, promoting global development and resolving international disputes. We support the further enhancement and strengthening of the United Nations constructive role in preventive diplomacy, in peacemaking and peace-keeping on the basis of the purposes and principles of the Charter.

As the frequency and scope of United Nations peace-keeping operations is growing, we deem it important and relevant to stress such basic principles of the Charter as respect for the sovereignty of, and non-interference in, the internal affairs of Member States. Those principles must be strictly observed at all times when undertaking preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping operations or post-conflict peace-building. Prior consent and pledges of cooperation by the parties must be obtained, and strict impartiality should prevail in all peace-keeping missions. Only in this way can United Nations preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping operations fulfil the underlying purposes of the Charter and achieve the desired positive result.

The peaceful settlement of international disputes is an important principle of the Charter, one which we deem to be the essence of preventive diplomacy. Everything should be done to bring the opposing parties to the negotiating table before the outbreak of conflicts, so that they can start consultations to achieve a peaceful settlement. All disputes

between States, regional conflicts or even internal conflicts, however complex they may be, should be amenable to a political solution, and nothing should be done to aggravate the situation.

Not long ago, the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel signed an agreement on mutual recognition and on the question of self-government for Palestinians. Although just a beginning, the move was a major breakthrough in the settlement of the Middle East question, which has dragged on for nearly half a century. This agreement was the result of efforts by the international community and by both Palestine and Israel to settle an international dispute by peaceful means. We sincerely welcome and wish to express our congratulations at this development. We can see from this that as long as a glimmer of hope remains, one must not give up the pursuit of a peaceful settlement.

Needless to say, one should adopt a very serious attitude towards, and firmly oppose, any act of aggression that tramples on the sovereignty of another country, such as larger States bullying smaller ones or the strong lording it over the weak in the international arena. We disapprove of the indiscriminate use of sanctions or force in the name of the United Nations. We also believe that humanitarian missions must not be transformed into military operations and that a war cannot be stopped by expanding it.

It must be noted that in a world troubled by recurrent regional conflicts and interwoven contradictions, the United Nations alone cannot hope to resolve all international disputes. It has the duty to undertake this task and maintain international peace and security. But regional organizations should also be taken into account and encouraged, as provided in Chapter VIII of the Charter, to assume greater responsibility and play a more active role in this regard. In view of the proliferation of United Nations peace-keeping operations and the concomitant demands on the Organization and Member States in terms of manpower, finance and material resources, we deem it essential that the United Nations act within the limits of its means and enhance the cost-effectiveness of such operations.

Peace and development are inseparable. Economic development cannot get off the ground without the prerequisites of peace and stability. On the other hand, unless there is sound economic development, there can hardly be secure or enduring peace and stability. We maintain that the United Nations should meet the demands of the developing countries for social and economic advancement and should give this very high priority. This is the way to make the United Nations an Organization that all the countries of the world will support and count on. This is also the way to enhance further the role and prestige of the United Nations. Proceeding from this consideration, we in China have stepped up preparations for the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, scheduled for 1995. We also give vigorous support to the convening of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen the same year.

It must be pointed out that unless the international community helps the developing countries break loose quickly from poverty and backwardness, there can be no sustained growth or prosperity for all. Hence, we call upon the developed countries to do more to curb trade protectionism, contribute more funds for development and environmental protection, cut back debt burden, increase official development assistance, reduce restrictions on technology transfer and open their markets wider so as to create a favourable environment for the economic recovery and revitalization of the developing countries. This will prove a boon to the developed countries themselves. At a time when the world economy has become increasingly interrelated, the revitalization of the developing countries will be a boost to the world and will spur to the economic recovery and growth of the developed countries.

Since the founding of the United Nations, tremendous changes have taken place in the world and in the Organization itself. United Nations membership has increased from the original 51 to 184 now, the majority being developing countries. The Chinese Government is of the view that, in keeping with developments, the United Nations should be restructured, and the composition of the Security Council could be appropriately enlarged to enable the Organization better to respond to the changes in the world, meet the concerns and wishes of the membership and enhance its own role in international affairs. Reform of the Security Council should enable it better to discharge its mandate in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. It is the collective will and common aspiration of the membership that in the new circumstances the United Nations should be better equipped to address major international issues vigorously and effectively and in a fair and balanced manner. Therefore, the reform of the Security Council and other United Nations organs should take due account of the principle of equitable geographical distribution and should accommodate the interests of the developing countries which make up the overwhelming majority of the membership. Since any reform would

affect the interests of all Member States and involve a revision of the Charter, views from all quarters must be heard. The reform plan should undergo extensive discussions and consultations by the membership and should be generally acceptable to all.

The Chinese Government has stated on many occasions that China stands for the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction. At the same time we hold that the ultimate objective of mankind should be the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of those weapons. Now that the Conventions banning biological and chemical weapons have been concluded, we deem it high time that the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons were put on the agenda.

The international community has expressed concern over the issue of a nuclear-test ban. The Chinese Government has always stood for a total test ban within the framework of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. We support an early start to negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and will work in common with other countries towards a comprehensive nuclear-test ban at an early date.

China has always exercised great restraint in nuclear testing. The number of our tests is the smallest among all nuclear Powers. While a nuclear test ban is necessary, to undertake not to use nuclear weapons at all is far more crucial, because this will not only make their testing, development, production or deployment devoid of any meaning, but will give great impetus to nuclear disarmament, which will contribute tremendously to world peace and security. If, however, complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons cannot be achieved soon enough, then let the nuclear Powers reach an agreement not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use them against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-free zones. This is entirely feasible and should be done as soon as possible. This will put nuclear Powers to the test to see whether they are genuinely willing to treat non-nuclear-weapon States as equals. China long ago unilaterally undertook not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances, and not to use or threaten to use them against any nuclear-free zone or non-nuclear-weapon State. We call upon all the other nuclear Powers to make the same pledge and conclude an international convention to this effect as soon as possible.

Now there are international arrangements and conventions that are designed to control arms transfers and ban certain types of weapons of mass destruction. Such conventions are aimed at maintaining international and regional peace, security and stability. The arrangements designed to control transfers of missile technology should also take into account such elements as the arbitrary use of missiles for attacks on other countries. Otherwise, such an arrangement will become a means by which certain Powers can maintain military superiority or play power politics. That is morally unjustifiable. We oppose the all-too-frequent arbitrary use of sanctions by one country to bring pressure to bear on another under the pretext of controlling arms transfers while engaging in massive arms sales of one's own which jeopardize the sovereignty and security of the country concerned. We also denounce the hegemonic conduct of a self-styled "world cop" that tramples upon international law and norms of international relations by endangering another country's navigational safety and normal trading under the pretext of enforcing the ban on chemical weapons and in disregard of the provisions of the relevant international conventions.

Thanks to the policy of reform and opening to the world, China's economy has expanded considerably over the past 15 years and is now in high gear. Our gross national product rose 12.8 per cent last year, and the current year's growth rate will again be in double digits. Our foreign trade and economic cooperation have been expanding rapidly. Total trade volume in 1992 was a 5.2-fold increase over 1978, the year before the start of the reform and opening-up, and represents an annual growth rate of 13.9 per cent. Investments from overseas have flowed in rapidly. Nearly 50,000 overseas-funded projects involving $58 billion were approved in 1992. The momentum has continued into the current year. High-speed growth has helped basically solve the problem of feeding and clothing a population of over 1.1 billion and put China on the road towards prosperity. It has also boosted economic exchanges and cooperation with other countries. This is good for both China and the world.

But we have encountered some problems as our economy has picked up speed. These problems will be resolved by accelerating and deepening our reform. We have taken a number of measures to strengthen macro-control and readjust the economic structure to ensure healthy, rapid and steady economic growth. We are fully capable of attaining our objective. We are full of confidence in the future of our development programme.

It is an objective reality that China has indeed achieved impressive economic success. But it does not tally with the facts to exaggerate our economic strength.

Given China's vast land area, huge population and uneven economic development in different parts of the country, our per capita gross national product is still quite low. Ours is still a developing country. It will require several generations working very hard for many decades before we can attain the level of an average developed country.

At this juncture, I would like to draw attention to assertions recently bruited about on the international scene: that China's economic success would entail a military build-up, or that China would move to "fill up the vacuum", thus constituting a threat, and so on and so forth. This is utterly groundless. A China with a burgeoning economy is an important factor contributing to the economic well-being of Asia and the world at large. The Chinese people had long suffered under imperialist aggression, and it regained independence only after horrible sacrifices in countless grim struggles spanning more than a century. Nothing can make us forget the episodes of our history when our country was subjected to foreign aggression, dismemberment and enslavement. Our ancient sage Confucius, that great thinker and statesman, admonished: "Do not do unto others what you would not like others to do unto you".

Even when China becomes more developed, we will never engage in aggression or expansionism; nor will we ever seek hegemony. This is a pledge which has been enshrined in our Constitution and which has become part of our consistent and firm basic State policy. It has been borne out by facts that China is a staunch force for world peace and stability. Our limited defence capability is solely for self-defence purposes. Many of our military industrial plants have been converted to civilian production. Our military expenditures are the lowest among the major countries. We have neither troops nor military bases on foreign territory. We are immersed in economic construction. Therefore, we need an international environment of enduring peace as well as long-term amicable relations with our neighbours. We are ready to cultivate and strengthen similar relationships with all other countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

No matter how the wind may change its direction on the world scene, China will unswervingly play its part in preserving world peace and promoting common prosperity and development.

Mr. JUPPÉ (France) (*interpretation from French*): I should like first to say, Mr. President, that France is pleased to see the General Assembly meeting under your guidance this year. Your election is just testimony to the esteem in which the international community holds your country. It also affords us the opportunity to welcome the "silent revolution" that has been taking place in Latin America over the past few years, which has put many States back on the path of national reconciliation, democracy and economic development.

The year which is ending will have been as rich in promise as it has been fraught with danger. Conflicts once thought to be insolubie suddenly seem to be on track towards resolution. On behalf of my country, I should like to pay tribute to the men in the Middle East, in South Africa and in Cambodia who found the courage to take the path towards reconciliation and peace: Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, F.W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk and all those, known and unknown, who accompanied or even preceded them on this courageous path.

The agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) opens the way to the settlement of a conflict which some had despaired of seeing resolved, and makes it possible to conceive of a radically new future for the entire region. This revolution gives us new reason to believe in human will and encourages us never to consider the hope for peace as a chimera. From us, it calls for collective effort, including financial effort, in order to translate this hope into reality as soon as possible. It also invites us to erase the aftermath of conflicts as reflected in past resolutions of this Assembly.

But the end of what was for years called the balance of terror has also led to new kinds of uncertainty and disorder.

Russia is going through a political and economic transition that could lead to serious internal difficulties, as the events of the past few days have shown. In that context, I should like to reaffirm France's support for the process of democratization and reform courageously undertaken by President Yeltsin.

In the former Yugoslavia war has been raging for two years, with its attendant death, suffering and destruction. Other regions in Africa, Central Asia, the Balkans and the Caucasus are falling or could fall victim to this new type of conflict, resulting from the break-up of States and the resurgence of nationalist, ethnic or religious passions. Elsewhere, States put under a sanctions regime by our Organization for failing to comply with the obligations of

international law or with commitments they have made persist in refusing to take the measures that would permit them to regain their place in the international community. Almost everywhere, the proliferation of weapons is a fearsome factor for instability.

In the face of the promises and dangers I have just outlined, France bases its foreign policy on a few guiding principles. Whether they are found reassuring or disturbing, I should like to recall them to the Assembly.

The first principle is the desire for independence. France has amply demonstrated that it is ready to act in concert with others where the ends are genuinely collective. But, needless to say, it does so in complete sovereignty. Exercising freedom of judgement and choice, France refuses to follow the orthodoxy of the moment or to succumb to pressures resulting from relative material strengths.

The second principle, shared by many in this Hall, is a commitment to our fundamental interests. Like every other State in this Organization, France has its own strategic, commercial and cultural interests which it seeks to preserve. While we are open to negotiation and to the mutual concessions it implies, we cannot be made to give up anything we consider to be an essential element of our security, our prosperity or our culture.

The third principle is devotion to law and justice. Beyond its own interests, France aspires to help ensure that certain fundamental principles first inspired by France, among others, triumph throughout the world: the right of peoples to self-determination and security, human rights and the right to development.

Finally, one last aspect of our diplomacy, in the service of the others, is France's perseverance, and at times stubbornness. May I recall our resolve - despite obstacles - in opening up the path that would eventually lead to the restoration of peace in Cambodia, and our determination to see institutional legality restored in Haiti.

These unchanging principles dictate the two main lines of the policy which my country hopes to implement on the international stage.

Our ambition concerns Europe first of all.

Whatever the present difficulties, whatever the prevailing scepticism, France will not falter in its resolve to build with its neighbours a strong, prosperous, democratic and generous Europe, capable of making its voice heard and of contributing to world peace. This is an irrevocable choice for us because the peoples of Europe need a plan that brings them together, and European unity is the only goal that measures up to the values they share. Moreover, the building of a united Europe is the only way to avert the dangers threatening our continent at this time: dangers arising from the resurgence of the most implacable forms of nationalism and from the persistence of unacceptable economic disparities. Europe's success will serve as an example for other regions of the world as did in its day the reconciliation between France and Germany sought by General de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer.

I have already spoken of the conflict raging in the former Yugoslavia.

France has spared no effort to put an end to it. As you know, France initiated most of the Security Council resolutions designed to discourage or punish aggressors. Together with its partners, France provides an essential part of the humanitarian aid sent there. Its soldiers represent the largest of the contingents made available to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and more than a dozen of them have paid for their generous presence there with their lives. It has so far been the only country to send reinforcements in accordance with resolution 836 (1993) in order to contribute to the security of the protected areas and the Muslim populations there. France was, as well, the first nation to deplore the inadequacy of the actions taken by the international community in regard to the former Yugoslavia. The efforts it has made entitled it to tell those who have been free with their advice and lessons that they might be better heard if they were agreeing, when they are able to do so, to commit their own troops to the field. Once in contact with the realities of the situation, they would undoubtedly better appreciate the fact that between negotiated peace and chaos there is no middle ground.

Let us learn the lessons of this painful experience. It is essential for us to acquire the means to avoid the repetition of such a conflict, and to ensure, without waiting for future progress in the construction of a united Europe, that preventive diplomacy, military openness and respect for the rule of law prevail wherever latent tensions remain. This is the intent of the proposed pact on European stability which France has submitted to its European partners and to which it would like to associate Russia, as well as its allies across the Atlantic, Canada and the United States.

Europe is, of course, far from being the sole horizon of France's action. My country has long-standing, close relations with many parts of the world. For the long-term organization of the international scene in the aftermath of the cold war, France naturally turns to the United Nations.

Because it believes in the mission of the United Nations, France wants a strong and effective Organization.

This goal involves, first of all, the reforming of the Security Council. Its enlargement, which has become necessary today in the light of the world's evolution, must be envisioned as the way to increase its effectiveness.

France understands and supports the aspirations of some of its partners to exercise their international responsibilities more actively, provided that they are ready to commit themselves in the field. However, the expansion of the Council should not be achieved at the expense of one or another group of States; in particular, it must preserve the capacity of the developing countries to make their voices heard. In our view, this is an essential requirement.

In their wisdom, those who drafted the Charter recognized that only a group of limited size could take prompt measures to restore peace when confronted with an urgent crisis. We should therefore take care that the projected enlargement does not lead to a paralysis of the Council.

France hopes that at its present session the General Assembly will decide to open discussions on ways to reform the Security Council. A solution will have to be found that reconciles the will to reform with the desire for effectiveness. This is why enlargement, in our view, will have to be decided according to a formula combining new permanent members and additional non-permanent members.

The Secretary-General is a key institution of the United Nations. France would like him to be given the means to carry through the innovative action he has undertaken. Allow me to pay a tribute to the energy, authority and courage with which our Secretary-General is carrying out his missions.

France approves not only of his political initiatives but also of his tireless efforts to rationalize the functioning of our Organization. We must combat the proliferation of institutions, which consumes our resources and threatens the coherence of our efforts. We must improve the coordination of activities linked to development and restore to the Economic and Social Council its role as a provider of stimulus and organization. We must combat administrative waste wherever it exists, without hesitating to punish any abuses that may be uncovered. Lastly, we must have more supervision and greater transparency in peace-keeping operations.

The Secretary-General still does not have all the means to exercise his responsibility to the full. France calls on the Member States to provide him with those means without delay. Strengthening the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, establishing a mechanism for a true general inspection, and setting up a court for budgetary discipline are, in our eyes, indispensable measures.

The third requirement for strengthening the Organization is a clean-up of its finances.

Perhaps I should have begun with this point. According to an old French saying, money is "the sinew of war". It is also the sinew of peace. Our projects for this Organization will be no more than empty words unless we have the courage to adopt the new measures that its financial bankruptcy requires.

First, Member States which do not pay their contributions within 30 days following the Secretary-General's call for contributions should be penalized. France proposes that market-rate interest should be imposed on all late payments. This firm stance seems particularly necessary because the payment of accumulated arrears alone would suffice to resolve the financial crisis. It is also consistent with considerations of fairness and political morality. One cannot simultaneously speak of United Nations reform, justice and international development and exempt oneself from the primary financial obligation resulting from adherence to our Charter. It is high time to measure the generosity of words against the yardstick of arrears due our Organization.

The establishment of a mechanism for a true general inspection will, as I have said, make it possible to rationalize the functioning and costs of the United Nations. France will support all initiatives to supplement the existing procedures of internal assessment, which have already shown their limitations despite the judicious reorganization recently introduced by the Secretary-General.

Lastly, we must adopt an exemplary budget for the 1994-1995 period. We must not hesitate to reduce expenditures for obsolete activities. We will also have to provide sufficient funding for the new mandates entrusted to the Organization. If, from that, it is necessary to consider a reasonable increase in the ordinary budget, France, which has never espoused a dogmatic idea of zero growth, will readily accept this.

These are concrete measures. They require a collective effort on the part of Member States. But France is convinced that we can no longer be satisfied, as in previous years, with marginal adjustments. The very ability of the United Nations to carry out its mandate is at stake.

France, as you will have realized, is ambitious for the United Nations. With the support of renovated institutions and reorganized financing, the United Nations will be able to meet the great responsibilities incumbent on it: to preserve peace and collective security, to promote development and to address global problems whose international scale removes them from the individual action of States.

Peace is of course the first of our responsibilities.

The present instability in several parts of the world compels the United Nations to intervene more and more frequently in order to check the spread of conflicts and allow a negotiated solution to be sought. France, for its part, has wished to participate fully in this effort and is today in the front rank of States participating in peace-keeping operations.

This commitment obviously does not confer any privilege on us. But our experience enables us to cast a lucid eye over the operations in which we have participated and encourages us to reaffirm certain principles and to propose certain common-sense measures that might help increase the future effectiveness of our action.

First, greater political control is needed over operations that have become increasingly complex. Purely military considerations should never thwart - or even obscure - political ends. Naturally, regional or defence organizations may make useful contributions in terms of expertise, personnel or *matériel*. But the use of force presupposes that the guardian of the law - that is, the Security Council - exercises its authority in the name of the international community. This it cannot relinquish. That is why France insisted that the Secretary-General's Special Representative to the former Yugoslavia should have authority over all operations under international mandate. It is important, it seems to me, that we should maintain this requirement at all times. By the same token, France insists that the political ends of the operation in Somalia should not be lost sight of.

Next, we should systematically consider the question of the timetable of operations.

As a matter of principle, time-frames should be explicitly assigned to each operation in the actual resolution that institutes it. It is also important to know when to terminate operations that go on and on, needlessly dipping into the means of the Organization and its Member States. France fully supports the Secretary-General's efforts on this score.

Lastly, we must expand the capacity of the Organization to react. The time that elapses between our decision to create a force and the implementation of that decision is far too long. How many weeks did we have to wait before the air power authorized by resolution 836 (1993) on Bosnia was eventually deployed? And how many weeks for the ground reinforcements that had been announced to reach Sarajevo?

We cannot but note that the current procedures do not meet the criteria for rapid reaction and flexible use which are called for in this area.

France does not, however, believe that the Organization should have its own force. On the other hand, it has participated in discussions organized by the Secretariat-General on the concept of stand-by units. These discussions have resulted in original proposals for "tailor-made" forces for the United Nations. In this way, the Organization could have at its disposal support, transport and communications capabilities which it currently lacks for carrying out military actions speedily.

France, which has already offered, in a statement made by the President of the French Republic, to make available to the Secretary-General a 1,000-strong contingent for peace-keeping operations at 48 hours' notice, will take part in this effort.

These measures will have another advantage. They will add an extra degree of effectiveness to preventive diplomacy, which has to be central to the ambitions we have for the Organization. This policy requires us to

develop and put in place mechanisms for crisis alert, evaluation and prevention.

Several ideas were put forward in the "Agenda for Peace" - they included use of fact-finding missions and the effective deployment of United Nations forces - and have already been applied to certain difficult situations in Africa, Central Asia and the Balkans.

In this spirit, the United Kingdom and France are ready to submit to the Secretary-General proposals for compiling a list of prominent individuals who could intervene promptly at his request, in liaison with appropriate regional organizations, and provide them with equipment - specifically in the communications field - necessary for carrying out their mission completely.

It is through concrete initiatives of this sort, which may seem modest at first, that preventive diplomacy will gradually assume its rightful place in the maintenance of peace.

The effort made in relation to disarmament in the past few years, finally, should continue.

Considerable progress has already been made with the reduction of stockpiles from the cold-war era. But a new priority is becoming evident: the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. To attain this goal, we must be extremely vigilant in the threefold domain of nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and ballistic technologies.

In this light, France welcomes the signing in Paris by nearly 150 States of the Convention banning chemical weapons, the first real multilateral disarmament pact of general scope, and calls on the States which have not yet ratified this Convention to do so. It supports the efforts being made by several groups of countries to institute systems of control of missile technology, nuclear exports and the sale of so-called sensitive products.

France asks, finally, that the non-proliferation regimes be strengthened. It reaffirms in particular its desire to see the Non-Proliferation Treaty prolonged indefinitely and unconditionally. It continues to believe that it is only the Security Council that can decide on sanctions against irresponsible behaviour. This would be the case if North Korea were to fail to respect its commitments to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

What guarantees can be given for collective security and peace if nothing is done to try to resolve the economic and social disparities that are so often the source of conflict? We know that there can be no lasting peace without lasting economic development. That is why the "Agenda for Peace" unquestionably requires also an "agenda for development".

France, as is known, has consistently spoken for the interests of the developing countries, particularly the least developed, in discussion with its industrialized partners. It has tirelessly pleaded - sometimes as a voice crying in the wilderness - for a substantial increase in the level of official development assistance in order to permit these countries to enjoy trade advantages without reciprocity, to ease their debt burden and stabilize raw-material prices. Our resolve in this matter will not weaken: how can we accept, for example, a situation in which every year the African countries pay the World Bank more than they receive from it?

Nor can we accept the persistence, and sometimes the worsening, of the most glaring situations of distress. France has not forgotten the depth of the crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, with which it has so many ties. It believes it is essential that the basic achievements of cooperation between the European Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, should be maintained, especially with regard to trade.

Lastly, our third ambition for the United Nations concerns the vast issue of societal questions, linked naturally to the requirements of development but distinct from it.

The protection of human rights, the preservation of the environment, aid to refugees, the struggle against full-scale epidemics, organized crime and drug trafficking all have a worldwide dimension. The Organization must address these problems with the same energy it expends in the search for peace and the promotion of development.

Several important dates lie ahead of us. Let us apply without delay the recommendations unanimously adopted at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, particularly the creation of a post of high commissioner for human rights. Let us prepare for the conferences in Cairo and Beijing and the social development summit in Copenhagen with all the necessary determination, so as to reinforce the cooperation required in addressing demographic problems, the promotion of women's rights and the demands for social development.

Great epidemics have always been a threat to the world's nations. But the need for full-scale international mobilization is becoming particularly acute in the case of AIDS in view of the havoc of all kinds caused by the spread of this malady. I earnestly hope that, as we approach the second decade of this struggle, the coherence of United Nations action, and that of its specialized agencies and of all States and interested organizations, will be equal to this new challenge. In this context, France proposes the convening of a conference next year to bring together the main contributor countries in the war against this scourge in order to improve coordination of their efforts and give them a new impetus.

In most cases, these phenomena are not new. However, the challenge they pose to our societies, in the North and in the South, is of unprecedented seriousness. They affect underdevelopment as much as they do the excesses of the consumer society, and our traditional responses are proving to be inadequate or ineffective. We need new ideas in this area. The Secretary-General should have broad power to take initiatives and make proposals in this matter. France therefore suggests the formation of a group of prominent figures chosen for their intellectual and scientific abilities and moral influence to assist him in this vital task at the end of our century.

Setting forth such ambitions for the United Nations might have made the sceptics smile a few years ago. With the end of the cold war the international community has a historic opportunity: no longer to dismiss problems but perhaps to solve them; no longer to limit conflicts but perhaps to settle them.

Let us remain clear-sighted. This period could be merely a brief interlude. If we were to hesitate, would it be long before peoples succumbed to their basest inclinations, cast off the rules of international law or put themselves - in the best of cases - under the sole protection of regional, competing and potentially hostile solidarities?

We do not have unlimited time. It is therefore our duty to undertake without delay the reforms required to strengthen our Organization and to realize its new objectives.

I should like to assure the Assembly that in the pursuit of these twin goals, the United Nations can count on France's firm resolve.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.